

JUNE 26, 1973

VOL. 5-NO. 1

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ALLEGHANY
REVISITED

HOW IT WAS
ON THE YUBA

BIG TREES - BIG MEN

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HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

June 26, 1973

Vol. V, No. 1

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Editor: Milt Gottardi, Loyalton, Ca.

Cover: Norma White, Loyalton, Ca.

Art Work: Norma White, Loyalton, Ca.

Typing: Milt Gottardi, Norma White, Harry Klein and Class

Production Work: Susan Weatherson, Loyalton, Ca.

Officers of the Sierra County Historical Society:

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Loyalton, Ca.
- Vice-Pres.: Marne Scholberg,
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ALLEGHANY HISTORY

Settlements were started before the present site of Alleghany was chosen as the "town". The first settlements were established in the vicinity of Kenton Camp. Most of these settlements were wiped out by fire. At first, the name of Alleghany was Jericho, and later it was given the final name by Mr. Perry Bonham and Mr. Jim McCormick. The first settlers settled here in April, 1853. Gold was struck in October, 1855.

Alleghany was built in 1856. Joseph Evans was postmaster when the first post office was built in 1857. In the sixties, the Kenton and the Dreadnaught began to produce.



In the seventies, the Oriental, Rainbow, Yellow Jacket, Oceola and Tightner began some surface prospecting for quartz. Last to develop was the 16 to 1, which started in 1910 and has produced about 22,000,000 dollars worth of gold. The Oriental dug 734,000 dollars from an area 14 feet by 22 feet. The Tightner has taken out 3,000,000 dollars or more.

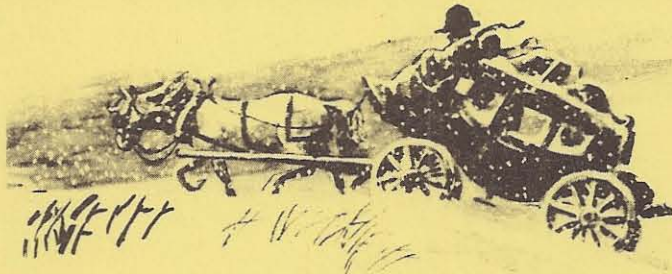
In 1869, Thomas J. Bradbury located the 16 to 1 only 1500 feet from his house. He found later that the adjoining vein was in his own back yard. The 16 to 1 is one of the richest producing gold mines in the world.

The roads were very rough and narrow.

Wagons and the horses had to wear bells to let oncoming traffic know so they could pull off the road to a wider space. Horses and wagons were the town's transportation. North San

Juan and Plum Valley were the stopping places on the three day trip to Alleghany. The present Alleghany Supply Company was once a livery stable for freighters alone.

When important mail was going out, a Wells Fargo messenger would accompany the mailman. There were quite a few holdups. The Joss House, which was located below Casey's Place, was a private school. The Chinese were very popular in Alleghany, then called Chinatown. Their town was located above the area where Mrs. Swan's house is at present. They made their living by panning for gold, then later they leased mines from the white people. They were quite friendly until one of the Chinese killed a White butcher, then they had to move out of the community,





later returning in the eighties to be friendly. There were two hotels, a general store, a livery stable, and a butcher shop. The first school was built where Martin Rohrig's house is now standing. The building, which housed the Methodist church in addition to the school, was caved in by heavy snow.

Most people worked placer mines. One mine they worked was the very rich Oriental Mine. In

the Oriental, the men had to chisel the gold out of rocks. Alleghany in the earlier days was strictly placer mining. Harry Apple struck it rich in the Ophir Mine on Kanaka Creek. Next, the Golden King and the Docile Mines, which were located on Kanaka Creek, were worked as quartz mines. They were worked many years and gradually ceased operations. H.L. Johnson hit a rich deposit of gold in the famous

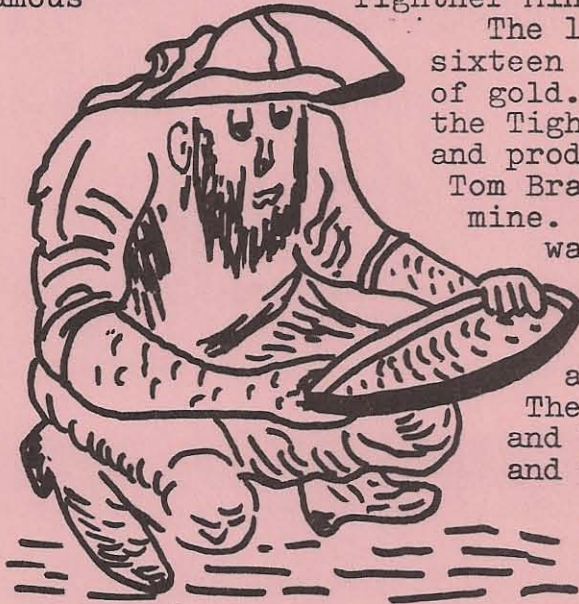


Tightner Mine in 1909.

The 16 to 1 was named by taking sixteen ounces of silver to one ounce of gold. This famous mine hit after the Tightner, and has been working and producing ever since. The famous Tom Bradbury located the 16 to 1 mine. A single chunk of quartz was found weighing 164 pounds. It produced \$26,800 in gold in 1927.

Alleghany was quite an active town in the early days. They had a very active orchestra and band for their lively dances and parties.

Alleghany, for the last century, has been dependent on the gold mines. Before





World War II, Alleghany had over 500 people. To-day it has about 150, and the town still depends on gold and mining.

The town was almost completely destroyed by a fire, which left only four houses standing; one of which is the Rohrig house.

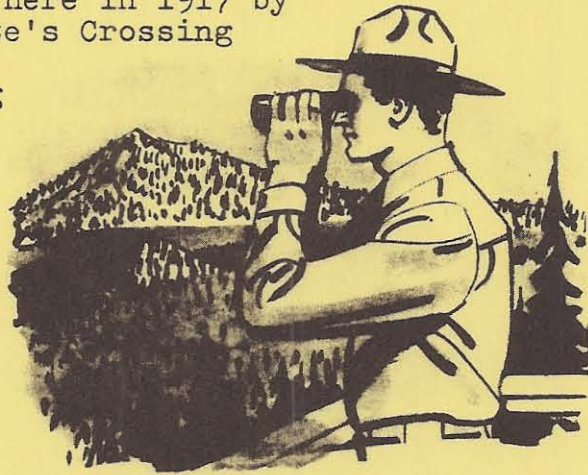
The present telephone building is standing where the first house was built in Alleghany over a hundred years ago. The catholic Church was brought to Alleghany from Morris Flat by horses, and was rebuilt here in 1917 by Mike Shea. Foote's Crossing

was built and braced by piling flat rocks up by masons. The Foote's was established as an all year route to

Alleghany. It was a masterpiece of construction. The first road into Alleghany was

the Henness Pass Road. The late Arthur D. Foote, who contracted the road and for whom it was named, spent his personal fortune to see that the contract was fulfilled. Afterwards, his money was appropriated by the boards of

supervisors of Nevada and Sierra Counties. Over a period of years, the people, mines, and the U.S. Forest Service left. The Foote's road started from Columbia Hill and was completed in 1913.



* * * * *

The preceding article is from The Golden Hornet, 1958, the annual yearbook printed and published by the students of Alleghany High School, and is reprinted here through the courtesy of Mr. David B. Dickson, who was principal at Alleghany at the time of publication. Information for the original article was gathered primarily at the Downieville courthouse by the students in connection with their history classes. A note of interest: Alleghany had only one senior in 1958, Jerry Huneke.

How It Really Was on the Yuba by
a Downieville Miner

We hope our readers have enjoyed the hitherto unpublished diary of a Downieville Miner. This diary was written from April 12, 1856 to March 2, 1859 and gives an excellent insight into the daily life of the typical miner on the Yuba during the hectic gold rush days.

We will run portions of this diary in all three of our bulletins in 1973. We wish to again thank Mrs. Marian Lavezzola's family. We wish to also thank Mr. Harry Klein and his hardworking Sierra County History Class for all the hard work of translating the diary, and then copying it on memo masters for publications.

And so begins part four of the Dairy of a Downieville Miner-

Sunday Eve December 21st 1856-

It was late when I retired to bed last night & late when I arose this morning--Have been at home all day have read some principally a Haspen Mag--

The weather is moderating-- the wheels even nearly clear of ice when I went out after dinner to see how things were looking- dread the thought of staying here another year. its probable that I shall be obliged to do so in order to finish my present claim & work another one which I have taken--

Baked a loaf of bread. Am too sleepy to read tonight went to bed early--

Monday Eve December 22nd 1856-

There was ice but not so much as has been common of late- the weather has moderated considerably I think. In the afternoon the sky became cloudy & looks like rain--

worked the greater part of the day- AS maybe Expected it is very lonesome to work all alone-- it makes me homesick more than anything else. If my claim was finished now I think I should leave without hesitating but the period of my departure maybe long way in the future yet. Stopped the wheels when I quit work this Eve-- for I do not intend to work tomorrow-- as I am going to town to appear as a witness in the Contested Election case which I Expect will be tried tomorrow- A.S. Headson wishes to deprive the present incumbent of the office of County Surveyor for which he was a candidate & defeated at the Polls--

Tuesday December 23d 1856-

Rain during most of the night. The river was rising when I got up & it was still raining--After breakfast hurried up to Miotts to inquire if Bapett had gone to town yet & learned that he had. The Election Board of this Precinct called by the defendant to attend the trial in the case of "The contested Election" which was expected to come off today. I appeared in court with the other witnesses but there learned that our appearance today was useless as the plaintiff in the case asked for a change of venue. I shall probably have to attend

again in about a week Recd. four papers from the P.O.

As Mr Still the defendant had called tous totown to testify in his case which he invited us to five in number to dine with him which invitation we accepted and had a good dinner--arrived home about middle and afternoon-- The rain had ceased & the sky was partially cleared & I started the wheels again but now it seems as if my labor was useless for the rain is coming down in quite a shower--Been looking over the Tribunes which I rec^d today--

Wednesday December 24th 1856-

Took a look at the diggings--stopped a small leak in the flum & was going to work when it began to rain & I thought it best to get some wood-- Paid a visit to Whiting A. Fellow & Co. they have done but little lately, But are nearly done. they Expect to finish in a couple of days-- My object in going up to see them was to inquire whether Whiting A. F.-- would come & work for me after they make a finish up there. He could not answer me definitely as he, would have to go to Eureka first to see about his claims there. was nearly night when I returned home-- In my absence the band of the lower pump had given away-- the diggings were filling up rapidly so I stopped both wheels & hauled the lower pump with its broken band out of the way--

Since supper have read the latter half of the 15th Chapter of the "Decline & Fall"--

Thursday December 25th 1856-

Snow fell about two inches deep after bedtime-- when I got up the sun was shining on the Mountain tops-- sky perfectly clear-- In the forenoon wrote a letter to sister Mary in answer to two which I have received since I last wrote-- was up the Middle Fork in the river, Did not make an engagement with anyone. On my way back stopped Miotts-- Five or six men were playing cards-- Some of them had great difficulty in sitting up-- One man was asleep on a bench & another old man was lying on the floor-- the proprietor of the house was also in bed sleeping off last night's debauch--

Friday December 26th 1856-

There has been neither rain nor snow to day-- the sky has been clouded up most of the time, looks now as if it would snow soon probably tonight. Busied myself in making a pump belt-- As I had no canvas-- was obliged to dig up the hose which has been buried under the snow since the first storms-- It was frozen & covered with ice. I thawed & dried it by the fire--

Dr Yarrington was here a few minutes in the forenoon he had not been here in four months before--

Cochran had the County Survey Mr Still up to survey his Ranch-- they make one line along by the house where I live & their lower corner a little lower down-- Finished the pump belt & got both pumps working before dark-- Since supper finished my reading of the 16th Chapter of the "Decline & Fall"--

Saturday Eve Dec. 27th 1856-

Snow has fallen to the depth of four inches before I got up-- has been snowing nearly all day-- is falling very fast now-- split some wood & carried it to the house.

Davis & Pride my neighbors were here in the forenoon. they wanted me to write a letter for each of them. I did so. they spent a couple of hours here this evening. they came for their letters-- on- of which I finished while they were here. they have just gone. Both are from Virginia, Neither of them voted for Fremont but both are hostile to the extensions of slavery--

Read a few pages in the 17th Chap. of the Decline Fall. weather is not cold--

Sunday Eve Dec. 28th 1856-

Ceased snowing before morning-- The storm of yesterday & the evening before added nearly too fast to the quantity that we had before-- make a visit to Davis & Co before I had my breakfast-- wanted to borrow a couple of papers & as they intended go to town I was obliged to go early-- They had just breakfast-- Snow thawed a little-- I started the wheels just before dark-- Have been down to Davis since to get a paper the Pacific which they promised to get from the P.O. for me--

Monday Eve Dec. 29th 1856-

Sun shone brightly in the early morning but long before noon it was obscured by the clouds as usual-- I started the wheels last night & expected to begin work right after breakfast, but alas for human Expectations! when I went to the diggings I saw that the whole place was as full of water as it was last evening-- the lower pump was working well enough but the upper wheel was at rest. a large stick floated through the gate at the head of the flume & got fast under the buckets. I removed the stick without any difficulty & when the wheel revolved well as ever- thus I was hindered from work another half day spent the time reading Libbon finished the 17th Chap- worked in the Claim all of the afternoon. George Macy came up here looking for a place to work. I hired him to work for me at fifty dollars per month. He promised to bring his blankets to morrow-- Is cloudy not a star to be seen--

Tuesday December 30th 1856-

Had breakfast late. I saw Davis & Co. at work before I began to get my breakfast. Turned the water out of the flume by taking off a side board near the head & putting the same board diagonally across the bottom to throw all of the stream out, I patched & cancelled the places where I thought it would be likely to leak, finished that part of the operations in the afternoon. took up the board which let a large portion of the water to run down the flume again, did not put the side board in its place as I thought I should want help to do so--

The paper man came along- he had a new work entitled the "Golden Resources of California" it is in pamphlet form & contains a little less than one hundred pages. the author is a minor whom I have often

& comunicatedwith in Downieville I bought the work & have read it aloud this evening to Mr. Pride of Davis' Co. who came up to hear me--

It is snowing very fast. the wind is beginning to blow--

Wednesday Dec. 31st 1856-

Snow fell to the depth of several inches during the night but was settled verymuch before morning by a lightfall of rain which sat in before daybreak-- has been snowing andraining at different periods was too stormy to be out much-- I baked a loaf of bread in the forenoon-- George Macy came up from Downieville in the forenoon-- He brought his blankets and expects to work for me as soon as the weather will permit. Dr. Yarrington came along in the afternoone on his way to Downieville-- I gave him twenty five dollars & recd his receipt in full of all claime against me-- Fixed theflume & started the wheels it is raining-- Have read the 19th Chap. of "Decline & Fall--

Thursday Jany. 1st 1857-

A slightfallofsnow was seen on the ground this morning. I was not up early, but had breakfast over & was out at work by eight o'clock--George Macy who came up yesterday began to work to day-The river had been running over the digging & filled it up partly with mud and gravel- we were kept busy for three hours in shoveling this loose stuff away. Then we took the boxes down & moved them over nearer to the flum which is the side that remains to be worked- got them fixed up again & the water to running through them but did not wash much- George busier himself in stripping off the top & I was cleaning out a drain in which operation I had to lift some very heavy rock, I think I lifted rather more than I should-- As I have not been at work in several days I was more easily worn out, infact I feel pretty well tired outfor one days work. George complains somewhat, have read the 20th chap. of the "Decline & Fall" there is more philosophy in it that I can well comprehend of fix were in the mind at one reading & especially when my attention is distracted by conversation as it has been this Evening, I was obliged to reread several positions & then without any adequate notions ofthe senseofthepassenger. As I grow older I am constantly advised by experience of my want of judgment & memory I have as yet learned scareely anything of those sciences & foreign languages which ought to be familiar to every schoolboy & as for thought & original ideas I have never presumed to advance beyond the beaten track--

Friday January 2nd 1857-

Snowing at surise, not very fast in the forenoon, but in the afternoon it came down rapidly. Did not work in the diggins cut down a small oak tree out of which I made a butte for splitting wood. split on small log & carried pieces in the house. As I was not up at a very early hour & there was absorbed with thick, dark clouds night seemed to coming on so very soon. I have busied myself with sewing, snowballing with George--who is fond of fun &

frolic- & with reading since dark the 21st Chap. of the "Decline & Fall--

In the afternoon we both started contemplated paying a visit to our neighbors (Davis & Co) I carried a couple of papers down which I borrowed of them on Sunday last but when we arrived there found the doors locked & the inhabitants absent. George found the key which they had scooted under a few of bark and opened the door upon which I thru the papers upon a stool, and then shut the door & left--

The storm has been increasing in violence are of the Evening. snow has nearly twice turned to rain & I expect that a deluge will follow. Begin to poor that I cannot work anymore this winter it is disagreeable but I must submit to the chorus of fate then has been as much stormy weather this seasons, as there was in the abstract season of '52 so those who were here then & here now assest & which I suffered in turn. It is impossible to do anything at all--

Saturday January 3d 1857-

There was rain & snow falling nearly all night, the wind was very high at different, so high that I began to fear that the house was in danger. however when I awoke at an early hour this morning after the uneasy slumbers of the night I saw that the house was ????? as yet & that the rain which had fallen had not raised the river very much.

notwithstanding the constant storm the weather does not seem to be cold but I expect that is because I do not mention for from the fire--

was down to Davis' Cabin in the forenoon while George called on Miott to get a book "Plutarchs Lives" which he (Miott) borrowed of me some four months ago & never returned, George returned with the intelligence that the book had been loaned by MsM, & was not there, after dinner we concluded to go to Downieville to get letters (if any) & papers from the P.O. the mail was in late I recd. nothing. George got one letter from his relations in N. Brahams. I read one letter for Mrs. Isacc Davis which I brought up for him, but he was not at home & consequently missed the pleasure of hearing from his family & friends in Virginis--George has spent the evening in moulding vall for his Colts revolver & loading the pistol-- I have read the 22nd Chap. of "Decline & Fall".

The storm has been increasing in violence since noon-- a great quantity of snow has fallen to day George purchased an Arithmetic in town & intends to devote his attention to the study & application of its principals--

Sunday ~~the~~ Eve January 4th 1856- *

The storm continued to rage during the night, the wind blew with great violence--It grew colder & the snow ceased to melt off of the roof of the tent.

George was up before me & had a fire made & breakfast started when I arose from my couch of blankets The wind has driven the snow about so much to day that the silly rain was impentsable to the visions-- spent most of the time within doors. read the 23d chapter of "D. & Fall" George was studying his Arithmetic--

* Author's dates in January are so written.-- Ed.

We split and carried some wood to the house in the afternoon, not because we needed it particularly but because we required exercise & snowballing at which amusement we spent an hour could not give us a sufficient amount--

Monday Eve January 5th 1856-

I saw the moon before going to bed, the stars were shining & the clouds appeared to have dissipated so as to excite hopes of fair weather once more, but it turned nearly as bad to day as ever-- read the 24th chap- of "Decline & Fall: in the forenoon-- Went to town in the afternoon-- Recd a couple of papers at the P.O. Bought a late Tribune which has the Presidents Message in- I have read the most of it to night. Davis & Pride came up & I read the Message to them--

Tuesday Eve Jany. 6th, 1856-

Morning clear & frosty-- I went out to the diggings and started the wheels. They were loaded with snow but I soon knocked that off & had them running, while I came in George had breakfast ready. the pump had all of the water out by noon, in the mean time we sat in the house reading. I was interested in the last Tribune, & George in his Arithmetic---worked in the afternoon. Have about one days more work. before we can begin the next dam. There has been so little progress made in the diggings for the last month that it seems as if I never would make a finish of the claim--- The sky was clear most of Tuesday, but since dusk there has been quite a snow storm though it is clear now--- the moon is near its full & on the bright snow presents a beautiful sight. The trees are not yet divested of their cumbersome loads of snow which fell within the past week, with their limbs drooping merely down look not unlike what I have fancied the Alps to be which are written & spoken about so much.

When I was in town yesterday afternoon. I got three papers all Tribune which are always filled with much interesting matter I have not been able to read anything else since- but I have at last finished the papers & will be at leisure to talk up Gibbon tomorrow.

Cooking beans, the wood is dry & burns rapidly there is a great plenty of wood but it requires a good deal of labor to chop & split & then carry it to the house.

Wednesday Jany. 7th 1857

Weather has changed some again from moderately warm to very cold. water has been freezing all day. George & I made a fair days work but we could not see where we quit in the evening what we had done. I loaned some bedrock lentsawed gold-an clearing off a place to build a foot dam. soon after going out in the afternoon I discovered a large leak in the flume right under the lower wheel. about a sliver head of water came out of it. had great difficulty in stopping it & in doing so was mud drenched from head to foot. could not stop all the leak but shut off enough to enable the pump to take the balance-- A neighbor called on us this evening- George is reading a novel & I have been lurching my plank by putting a piece of drilling over the river.

//

Thursday, Jany 8, 1857

The wheels were loaded with ice when we began working the morning so that I expected that the shafts would break. after a great deal of trouble the ice was practically removed--the weather is constantly growing colder--It has been forming all day--cleared off a place for a dam took the boxes down & washed out, washed the rifle out also. Carried the boxes up to the ground we expect to work never George began to dig deep for the dam--It is really too cold to work--

Friday Jany. 9th, 1856

Everything kind froze up-- the wheels were both froze fast in the flume. Did not work--was in town in the Evening---

Saturday Jany. 10th, 1856

Did not rise till long after sunrise. Was up late the Evening before & after returning to bed slept very soundly. made no attempt to work to day. Sharpened the ax in the forenoon at Uncle Stephen Dodsons Cabin. Had quite a chat with him the first one of any consequence in twelve months.

A company of frenchmen who have been working on Stove Pipes Flat during the past years or two have quite their claims & began a new place in the Flat immediately below my house, they designed to run their tailings into the past of the river which I have taken up for fluming next year. I saw their intentions & remonstrated against the proceedings at first they were hostile & seemed determined to go on in their own way but finally they took the wiser course & abandoned the plan of slicing their tailings upon my claim--

Chopped & split about half a cord of wood. George carried it to the house---

Made a visit to Davis & Co's this Evening left George there playing cards for oysters.

Sunday Jany 11, 1857

Lay in bed till long after sunrise. George was up had fire made with breakfast under weigh before I was & dressed myself: started for town soon after breakfast, no ice last night. cloudy & warm. snow setting fast--- the trail begins to be very soft, walking difficult. From the appearance of the clouds & the state of the weather generally I think there will be a break up before long probably a great freshet--anything almost with be preferable to this uncertainty--

Bought two books. One by Douglass Gerrold Entitled "Men of Character" the other "White Slave of England"

Monday January 12th, 1857

Have been idle all day-- very cloudy & warm-- Reading "White Slaves of England" thought it useless to begin work in the diggins until the weather settles--there is a good deal of work to be done before any washing could be done & by the time everything was ready another great storm would come & stir up everything away altogether. It is much colder now than it was in the day

Tuesday January 13 1857

Rained a little last night & has been raining nearly all day--got up some wood in the forenoon Have finished reading the "White Slaves of England" by John C. Cobden. Negro slavery in the United States is nowhere, but the British system cannot last---

Wednesday January 14th 1857

It was storming throughout the night. the air is obscured by mist. It was so foggy at times to day that I could hardly see Davis & Co. cabin which is about forty rods from here-- The river rose during the night & has been going up all day- a great deal of rain has fallen already & from appearances we cannot hope that the storm will abate before the first of march April or May. I have given up all hopes of working the river anymore this winter & will think myself fortunate if the dam & flume did not carried away by the river--- The river begins to roar again which is its constant mine when its waters are high--

George left for town in the forenoon said he would return before night- Have read two Chapters in "Decline & Fall" read the 29th & 39th was at Davis the afternoon, they worked most of the day-they are not getting much gold--- talk discouragingly but hope to do better by & by--

I have some little idea of going home with the intention of spending a couple of months there with my family & there returning here in the early spring of the summer in order to work out the flume which I have begun but am uncertain which course I had better follow-- "to be or not to be?" is the question

Thursday Jany. 15th, 1857

I hoped when I retired to bed last Eve that the storm would cease before the beginning of another day but my wishes were destined to be disappointed. The storm increased rather instead of abating its fury & when I first saw the river I was astonished at its swollen appearance-- It had raised a good deal in the night. My first thought was of the flume, I hastened out there & found that it was in a critical situation. The flume was filling to overflowing-I was running over on all sides, It had sunk in one place & I was afraid that, that would be the cause of its going away, The water was running around one end of the flume & over the top in large quantities. The wheels were elevated as high as we could get them but they were moving with great rapidity--- I managed to have a pump belt--

I have no hope of saving the flume, have expecting that it would be carried away at all times during the day-the water is higher than it was in the morning & is still rising Some of the long and heavy timbers on which the lower end of the flume laid, we moved out of this place when I finish work out. Was down at Davis & Co's & some of them were up here. two of them ate supper with me, Read the 31st Chap of "Decline & Fall:

Friday January 16th, 1857

The weather changed in the night turned colder & the rain was succeeded by a light fall of snow. The river was no higher in the morning than it was last night. The flume which I hardly expected to see again was still in its place though the water was running over it everywhere-- Rained about half of the day.

The sun came out at noon. The two companies on the Flat worked up the afternoon-- I spent the time in reading-- In the forenoon I ran over the 32nd Chap-- of "Decline & Fall" in the afternoon Read the Preface & Introduction to Whittys Elements of Logic-- George Schols called him about middle of afternoon. he was out running-I loaned the "White Slaves of England" to him.

Made a visit (a brief one) to the Lower Co. on the Flat, since supper

Tuesday Eve Jany. 20th 1856---

George & I went out to the diggings soon after breakfast attempted to right the flume in one place when a prop beneath the stringer had been washed out & the stringer in consequence was but by the great weight of water above, we worked at it some time & did not give it up until we were nearly froze-- The flume is nearly full & there is a great deal running in channel besides. There is too much water yet for the flume to carry Perhaps no more work can be done. I am afraid not this winter. Have been in town this afternoon. Recd a letter from my wife. The sun has been shining allday--

Wednesday Jany-21st-1856

A hard crust made on the snow last night-- A heavy man can walk on it with safety-- George & self assisted Davis & his father to raise their derrick-- we spent about two hours down there. Chopped a log off & split it into pieces when George carried it to the house- Made an effort to stop one of the large breaks in the flume but did not succeed there is more water than I was aware of. The flume can not carry all of it- The most of the day has spent in idleness-- Finished reading the first volume of the "Decline & Fall" & have read part of the 1st chapter of the 2nd vol, It is more than a year since I began to read the 1st Vol.---

Thursday Eve Jany, 22nd, 1856

Lolling about as usual, Called on Uncle Stephen Dodson in the forenoon, had quite a chat with him-- visited George Cochrane, he has taken up a piece of ground for a ranche. The statutes of the state allow three months time to make two hundred dollars worth of improvements in, & Cochrane's time expires to day- he wanted me to estimate the value of the work which he has done so that I might assist him by my testimony when he goes to law with Mr Chase "what is trying to jump the ground" I dislike to serve as a witness & will not unless subpernael George has gone to Downieville- Baking Bread

Friday Eve January 23d 1856--

Woke up about eight o'clk. Read about twenty pages in the 2nd vol. of "Decline & Fall" & then stopped some of the great leaks in the flume. The water runs over off the upper end of the flume & also near the lower end. There is more water now than there has been at any time since the flume has been in a period of about six months. It's a great pity that it was not worked out last summer, If it were finished now I should leave for the Atlantic States---

The weather is delightful The sun is beginning to shine on the house again- snow is still two feet deep in places but on the hills exposed to the sun it is fast disappearing- For a few days past I have been paying a little attention to the Elements of Logic by Mr. Whitly. A knowledge of the theory and practice would and undoubtedly benefit me very much but I do not think that I will be able to gain some extension acquaintance with its rules for when work begins everything literary is obliged to succeed, George returned from town since dusk. He came here shortly before New Years to assist me to work in the river but as I cannot go on he is trying to find another situation.

of his audition and interlarding his language with what he calls "subline expressions" & "brilliant images" he sometimes impresses his hearing with the opinion that he must have more in him than the world knows of--he is very loath to acknowledge a superior & to those whom he considers his inferiors or even equals he assumes an over hearing tone & disposition which of course cannot but goldall of those with whom he may come in contact--

He has realized a good deal of money I expect during the past two years (at least such is the report) But I am afraid that the last enterprise which he has begun big (contesting the Election held in the East Fork Precinct) will end disastrously both for his reputation & for his pocket however it is no fault of mine if he does get himself in trouble Mr. Still gave me eight dollars to pay for the two trips down-- I started for home immediately & arrived about half past three. cooked & ate my dinner & made a short visit up to Uncle Stephens

I was in hopes yesterday that the storm was over but it is raining again to night. I expect that I will have to take my flume out yet in order to save it It is growing cold- read on members of the Pacific

Sunday Eve Jany. 13th 1856

After writing journal last night I read one chapter of the "Decline & Fall" which details the character conquest & court of Attila the king of the Huns, who was also called the "Scowge of God" I undressed & turned into bed about ten oclock but owing to the excitement of the day I could not sleep tried every possible situation in which more can lie but all to no effect, when several hours had been passed thus I consulted the watch & saw that it was already one oclock Sunday morning My sleep when I did succeed in going off was one unquiet dose in which I remained wrapped until half after Eight--

The sky was still hazy but presented more favorable indications than yesterday. I concluded to go to Downieville in order to get my mail matter then might be formed in the P.O. but when I arrived there I ascertained that the Atlantic Mail had not yet arrived but was expected daily-- Discharged my bill of the butchers- persued the last Sierra Citizens through & soon after in company with I.H. Bassett started for home again.

There are two flumes obstructed me on the East Fork when the proprietors of which informed me that they expected to finish them this winter yet

Bapit took dinner with me, he stopped all of the afternoon-- had considerable to say- chiefly one coming his early youth- He stayed till sunset.

Monday Eve Jany. 19th, 1856

The weather is not fairly settled yet cloudy in the forenoon & slight-fallof rain in the morning-- Snow is two feet deep & soft. One can hardly get along where there is no trail-- I have been expecting George to return from town & commence work for me again But he did not arrive till dark--

I am doubtful whether it would be best to go on working the ruin or to take the flume out in order to save the lumber and timber from the freshets.

If the weather was settled fairly I would endeavor to do some more work but I am afraid that I cannot do any more this winter.

The newsman come along & I bought the latest N.Y. Tribune- Read it through in the afternoon & visited Davis & Co. Sierra dunk is order to give them the news. They had bought a N.Y. Herald so I read to them from that, Read one Chap. in Gibbone--

Branchos Pride one of that Co. has been here, He is a native of Western Virginia a tall & well made young man, with no education scarcely at all. can barely read or write, is slow of speech & drawls his words out to an unmaturrallength, is very proliz where one started in a familiar subject his ideas are few Limited, Repetes the same intresting story over & over again until I am pretty well informed as to the private arraignment not only of his own family but of his neighbors--

Is growing colder-- the stars were shining but now they are again obscured by dark & angry clouds--

Saturday January 17th 1857

I was not up very early. The sunshone awhile. but soon the clouds obscured the bright luxury and the thick mists & quitti rain which felt gave nothing that the storm was not yet ended. The river was lower than it was last night & it has been gradually falling all day--An examination this morning I found that the upper wheel had recieved an injury in the night so that only half of it was left. The flume is considerably shattered--

This was the day appointed to take dispositions in the East Fork Preciuct contested Election Case. I arrived in Downville about noone. Went directly to the office of Col. Taylor who is one of the Defendants attorney & there found Dr. Zarrington. As Dodson & Mr. Still the Defendant. The cause is to be tried in the adjoining court of Nevada--The deposition were recorded by Mr. Lamb Parsons. Mr Tyler the collar guy of Col. Taylor in this case was the Expanding attorney for Defendant. Plaintiffs witnesses were not present. I was the first one explained. Mr Tyler has a quit cool. & collected manner, & though a young man I judge to be a shrewed & able lawyer, I have a natural hesitation in speaking before strangers especially when I first commence, I always was troubled with a difference of manner but I am rather worse in that respect now than I was long ago when I was a school boy & this awkwardness today by the inflation was increased to day by the reflection that if I should chance to make a slip of the tongue or any inadvertent remark whatever prejudicial to the cause of A.S. Dodsome. (the Plaintiff) that he would treasure it up & in the future pay it out with interest whenever he spite & spleen could gratify the inalinations of his soul with benefit to himself & loss to his enemies--however. I got along in a slow and easy manner & after Mr. Tyler finished his interrogatorries A.S. Dodson in the absence of his lawyer Mr. Platt proceeded to cross Examine Me. I suppose from his manner that he thinks himself shrewed & subtle for he exerted all of his ingeuinty (which don't amit to much) to involve me in intricacies when I would probably stumble & unable him to gain some points in his favor- after it was all over I could not envy him his success but I was surprised that he should reason to taunts & insuitations & finally closed by asking me to state the nature of the intimacy which had existed between us & its results, as that was not a reluctant question I was permitted to answer it at my option. I forbode to tell the whole of my opinion but merely said that he had wronged me. A.S. Dodome has some good qualities I must confess I believe that he is in the main honorable especially when his interest is not concerned he has unpleasant and agreable address but after the few usual common place remark are made he is dull & uninteresting in fact can not containe a conversation exceptly changing the subject his knowledge is easily exhausted on any subject but by dividing the attention

Saturday Eve Jany. 24th 1857

George got up, built fire & prepared breakfast when he informed me that it was nine o'clock & nearly time for a miner to rise-- The weather still continues pleasant & beautiful though of course I cannot say how long it will continue; perhaps only a few days---

Read the 4th chap. of "Decline & Fall" in the forenoon George has been in town since noone. He brought me number of the Pacific which he read at the P.O. I have read it through since his return. Have also read the 5th chap. of "Decline & Fall" which is occupied with the jurispre diner of the Roman world--

We have had splendid weather all of this week. It is a disgrace to remain idle during such favorable weather but I do not see how I am to avoid the calowity---

Sunday Eve January 25TH 1857---

Did not rise before Eleven o'clock--- George left for Downville soon after breakfast. In the forenoon was engaged reading the 6th chap of "Decline & Fall" washed a lot of shirts & ----- The sun was out very bright about noon. since then it has become cloudy & now it is raining-- It seems determined to storm all winter. Spent an hour at Davis' cabin.

Monday Eve Jany 26th 1857

No sign of rain in the morning & the day has been clear. I cauled the flume in the forenoon. stopped nearly all of the leakage-Alex illiott was here in the forenoon. he returned "Plutarchs Lives" which he borrowed some five months ago Was up to Uncle Stephens sharpen my ax & he is doing nothing at present---

Fixed the upper wheel this afternoon. Lorenzo Parks came along & wanted to hire out I engaged him to come on trial. George has not returned from town yet-- Have had a headache all day, will do with out supper to night-- Read the beginning of the IX Chap. of the 2nd Vol. of "Decline & Fall" Took a cold yesterday-- At different time during the last twodays I have felt a pretty sharp pain in my left side, have it again tonight,

Tuesday January 27th 1856---

Began work about middle of the forenoon. Dug a lot of dirt for the new dam Was cloudy all day and began to rain in the afternoon, has not rained much yet but looks as if it would. Was at Miotts in the afternoon- Borrowed the last Weekly Bullitin of him---

Lorenzo Parks the man that I hired yesterday came along towards night-- He is from Iowa & like almost everyone from that State is excluding slow. I do not expect that he is any hard worker but if the weather will permit I will give him a trial-- Was down to Davis this Evening--

Wednesday January 28th 1857

Was awakened by Lorenzo who called me about day break as he agreed to do when he retired to bed last night--- I was at the Empire Mill in the morning--- we were digging dirt for the dam most of the forenoon. Carried

about a dozen handbarrowloads to the lower end of the flum to replace that which had been washed off of the old dam---

Started both wheels in the afternoon but as the flum is nearly full everywhere & running over in places when the current is not agitated the starting of the wheels & particularly of the upper one made the water come out the sides of the flum in such quantities that the pumps though they were driven rapidly were of no avail---

This is the first real days labor I have done since the beginning of the stone--an well well worn out for one days exercise---

Lorenzo (Mynewman) is deeply interested in Davis' Arithmetic (Is work which George bought when he first came here but soon neglected) I have read about ten pages of "Decline & Fall" the latter part of the eight chapt of Vol. 2nd

Thursday Jany. 30th 1857

The water was low---started the wheels & had the ground dry by middle of forenoon---cleaned the gravel out of the place of our intended dam fixed up the wall when it had been thrown down by the water & carried about forty handbarrow loads of dirt--- the dirt was wet & of course heavy--- trail very bad--- about two o'clock the water raised & washed considerable of the dirt away

Friday January 31st 1857

Suffered from an attack of headache all night It began about middle of yesterday afternoon, retired to bed without supper, My forehead throbbed violently--- There was too much water for us to work--- Lorenzo chopped & split some wood in the forenoon--- I called at Uncle Stephens, also at Miotts & borrowed the January NO. of Harper, sat Lorenzo to digging dirt in the afternoon I went to bed & read Harper but before doing so I swallowed about one tablespoonful of Salts--- Head ached worse in the afternoon than in the morning--- The sun has been very hot--- the river is high & still rising--- The flum is full & running over---

Saturday January 31st 1857---

Lorenzo was up & had fire made before I awoke--- he prepared the breakfast--- The River was still very high--- as we were not able to go on with mining in the river Lorenzo concluded to quit--- he had worked two days & a half--- I gave him Five Dollars & took his receipt in full. He said he would go to Downieville & from then to Eureka to look for work --- He went away leaving his blankets---

I made a visit to Davis & Co. Cabin. found Mr David Rolston there. He has been working about the Butes quartz mills & designs putting up a mill himself next season--- He wanted to sell out all his interest here we made a bargain & I bought--- moved down here this afternoon--- Andrew one of my new partners assisted me---

Sunday February 1st 1857---

Slept but little in consequence I supposed of being in a strange place --- There are three of us together in the Cabine--- Their names are Isaac Davis and Andrew Moynahan: the one a native of Western Virginia and the other from the south of Ireland. Andy, as the latter is familiarly called

was up early as is his usual custom that & had the fire built and breakfast ready by sunrise--I rose soon after & read a few pages in "Decline & Fall" before breakfast-- They concluded to go to Downieville: I to fix myself as comfortable as possible in my new home,

I brought my table down from my old shanty to place my books on and to set by while reading and to write on--

Gave myself a good thorough bathing in cold water, donned clean clothes, washed my dirty ones & then began to make a bookcase-- made it of rough boards & covered it with drilling-- succeeded in getting it finished before night-- Davis returned from town about middle of afternoon, George Macy came up soon afterwards to get his blankets which was at my old shanty, He has been in town a whole week doing nothing, but has enjoyed work for the coming week-- The day has been magnificently beautiful-- snow is rapidly going off of the hill sides-- The Evening is also clear & bright with a resplendent moon-- One twelfth of the new year has already flown.

Monday February 2nd 1857

Andy, was out by daybreak--we breakfasted about sunrise-- Began work in the diggings right after breakfast. had some trouble to get the water from the ditch to the claim--the soil is a loose gravel & most of the water that we started from the ditch towards the diggings would loose itself in the excruciatingly loose soil---

I had not been at work an hour before I was nearly through--- my rubber boots were filled to their utmost capacity water is of course very cold--must work to keep from freezing---

Andy accompanied a couple of his friends up the East Fork in the afternoon. he has not returned yet. I got dinner & supper & am cooking beef & c for tomorrow--- a little rain at noon & cloudy part of the afternoon but it is partially clear now---

Tuesday February 3d 1857---

Andy, came home about midnight, his friends had detained him at Miott where they spent the time playing cards--- He was up this morning at daybreak--- Davis has been in Downieville since morning. he returned as Andy & I were eating supper. Brought by a letter from my wife--- Andy & I worked alone to day--- Been reading the 11th Chap--- "Decline & Fall"

Wednesday February 4th 1857---

Andy as usual was up first--- I soon followed--- There was two inches of new snow on the ground & was still snowing--- After breakfast Davis & I sawed two cuts off of a large log for wood to burn--- Andy split the wood & carried most of it to the house---

When the butcher came which was about ten o'clock we weighed the small articles of provisions & c which I brought down from my old cabins, this we did in order to arrive at the exact value of the articles---

Walked to Downieville after dinner-- on my way down met the paper man who had taken a letter from the P.O. for me--- It proved to be from Mr L.H. Taylor who in the season of 1855 lived & mined on the East Forke--- The letter is well written & afforded me much pleasure--- Recd one "Pacific" from the P.O. bought a couple of Magazines & soon returned---

The storm has grown more violent since morning---

Thursday February 5th 1857---

Storm continued all night--- no prospect of work when we went out--- Davis filed the two cross cut Saws we had borrowed one of which Andy, & I sawed off a log with & then took it home to Miotts---

Moved the Derrick in the afternoon, Storm ceased about noon--- it is freezing to night--- have begun the 12th Chap--- of Vol. of "Decline Fall"

Friday Eve February 6th 1857---

A hard frost last night-- has been cold all day a keen wind blew at times which made one think that our winter was not over yet. We have worked all day--- hoisted a large number of rock out of the diggin with the Derrick--- ground sluices some, but did not do so much as we might for want of water---

Finished reading the 12th chap. of 2nd Vol. of "Decline & Fall of Roman Empire"

It is freezing hard to night--- the night is clear & bright---

Saturday February 7th 1857

My partners Davis & Andy. pronounced this morning to be the coldest that we have experienced this year--- the frost was certainly severe, the river was quite low, the Ditch was frozen also--- We attempted to work at usual right after breakfast but from the scarcity of water we abliged to quit until the dñ got over the hills--- We have nearly finished washing off the top dirt & Expect to begin "washing up" as it is called on Monday--- In washing the top dirt which has no gold in of any account all the water is used that can be obtained--- a great many small stones are carried down the boxes & discharged into the current of the river--- for washing up the bottom of the bark when most of the gold is found one fourth of the same quantity of water will suffice--- My finger ends are quite tender caused by picking up wet stones---

Sunday Eve February 8th 1857

When I retired to rest last Evening I had laid out a fine scheme of operations for today--- I intended to mend a few old clothes, then to shave & wash my whole person-- & after dressing in my best clean clothes which by the way are Extremely poor, to sit down & write two letters; one to Mr. S.H. Taylor in answer to one I have lately recd from him & the other to my wife also in reply to one lately recd--- But "the best laid scheme of mice & men gang aft aglay"

Davis started for town soon after breakfast which was not very early --- Andy & I attempted to saw off a log for stove wood, the saw was in poor condition but we had worried it about half off when Mr Bassett on his return from Downieville called in here & stayed until the saw was nearly done

We then began again at the log and soon finished it, Andy got supper & I repaired my old pants--- My week for cooking begins to night--- I have baked a loaf of bread, boiled a kettle of potatoes--- have a pot of beef over the fire cooking---

The night is bright & freezing--- Mr Bassett is a great talker-- his conversation to day was chiefly reminiscences of his youth, he is one year my senior---

THE HISTORY OF THE NICHOLS MILL

The Nichols Sawmill was the last remaining lumber mill of four which had operated in the Sierraville area. The mill was first owned by Mr. Thomas S. LeBroke who lived in Sierraville in the home presently owned by Mr. Dave Roberts. The people of Sierra Valley knew the mill as The LeBroke Mill. Mr. LeBroke was married and had three children, a boy and two girls. The boy, named John Calvin, passed away in 1966. The older girl, Alice, died in 1967, and is buried in the Sierraville Cemetary beside her father. Mr. LeBroke was killed in a runaway accident on November 12, 1896, at the age of 56. One daughter, Aurora, is living in Sacramento, California; her name is Aurora Peterson. Mrs. LeBroke, shortly after her husband's death, sold the mill to Herb O. Nichols and moved away from Sierra Valley.¹

Mr. Herb Nichols, at the time he purchased the sawmill from Mrs. LeBroke, lived on the land in Sierraville now owned by Gerald Openshaw. Mr. Nichols kept the ranch, while running the sawmill, for his extensive teams of horses--horses needed to haul the lumber from the mill to available markets.

Mr. Nichols was remembered as a very friendly man who had two daughters and one son. Mrs. Elizabeth Brown recalls an incident that happened to the Nichols' children at the sawmill:

"One day the two older children were playing at the mill while Mrs. Emma M. Nichols was doing the cooking. Grace, the oldest daughter, was playing up above the mill where there was a large water tank. She hid and sent her brother down to the mill shouting that Grace was in the tank. The mill was shut down to rescue Grace, and when the men got up to the tank, Grace came around the tank laughing, saying it was just a joke. The two of them were punished. Children then enjoyed teasing the elders as much as today."²

Similar to Mr. LeBroke, Mr. Nichols also had a runaway accident with one of his teams. He escaped death, though his injuries left him somewhat crippled, and he walked with a slight limp until his death in February, 1920.

The Nichols sawmill was located about four miles above Randolph Mountain.³ The sawmill, comprising about twenty-eight acres, was water powered.⁴ A wheel, about thirty feet high and two feet wide, delivered water into a large tank on the top of the hill near the mill. Water flowed onto the wheel from a large flume. The tank then pumped water down to the mill.

Logs for the sawmill were cut from the surrounding area. The trees were felled with a drag saw which was handled by two men. The logs were then brought to the mill area in long shoots which were greased with bear fat. Three and four mile long snakes to the shoots were used, and a PeeVee was used to role the logs from the snake into the shoots. Teams of horses were also used to pull the logs down the shoots to the mill.



Picture showing the log shoot along which the logs were pulled by a team of horses.

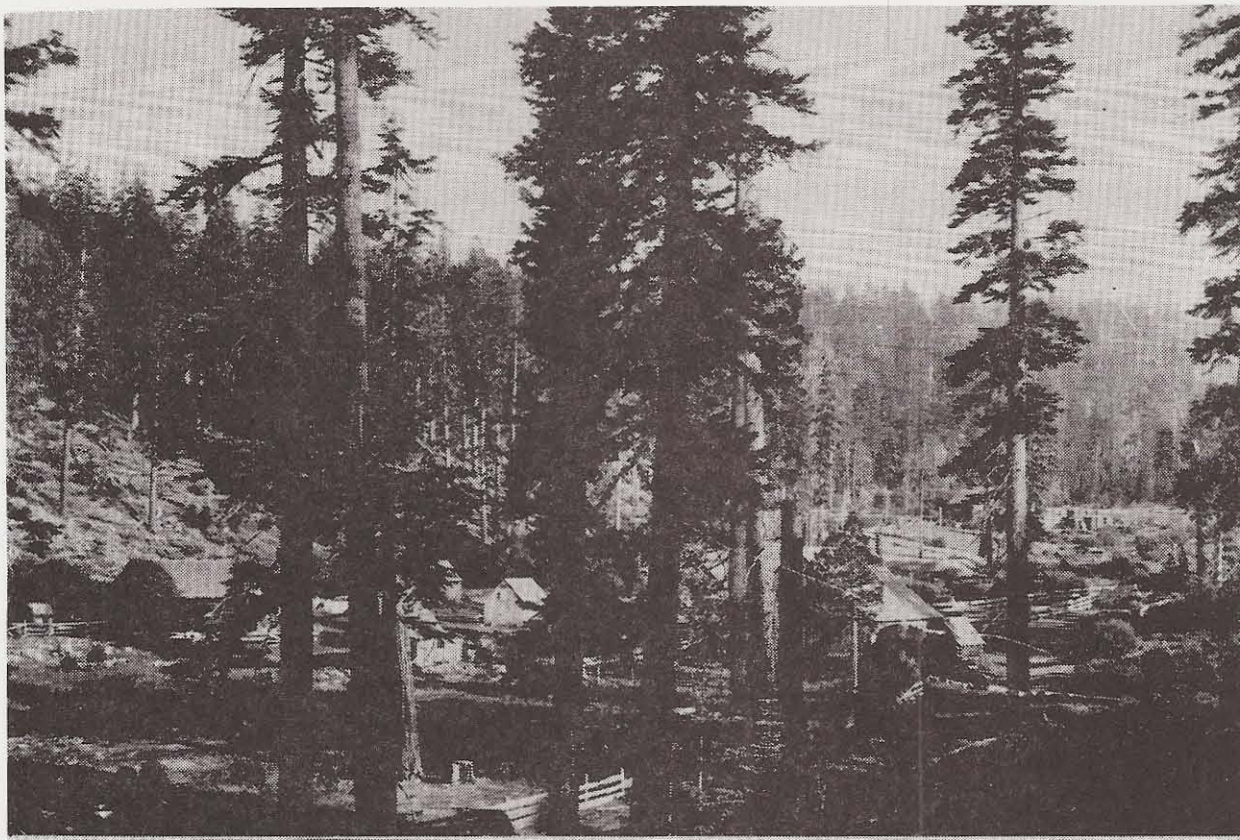
When a log was needed from the deck, it was pulled to the mill by cable. Sawdust from the mill went into the water and was taken out by a flume and released. A circular saw was used to cut the log, instead of the band saw used today.

The lumber cut from the logs (and sometimes loads of logs) were hauled by eight and ten horse teams. The horses responded to a jerk line--a long rope hooked to the horses bit. One jerk and the horse turned left--two jerks and the horse turned right. The horses were pastured at the Nichols ranch in Sierraville.

The mill produced around 12,000 board feet a day. There was also a shingle mill which put out a substantial amount of shingles for use in the Sierra Valley area.

Lumber for Mae Dellera's home (Sierraville, California) was manufactured at the Nichols Mill and brought to the home site by horse and wagon.⁵ Lumber from the mill was also used to build the side-walks in Sierraville which went from Herb Nichols' ranch to Fred Small's (the home presently owned by the Orzallies of Sierraville). These sidewalks were about eight feet wide and were constructed from 1912 to 1914.⁶

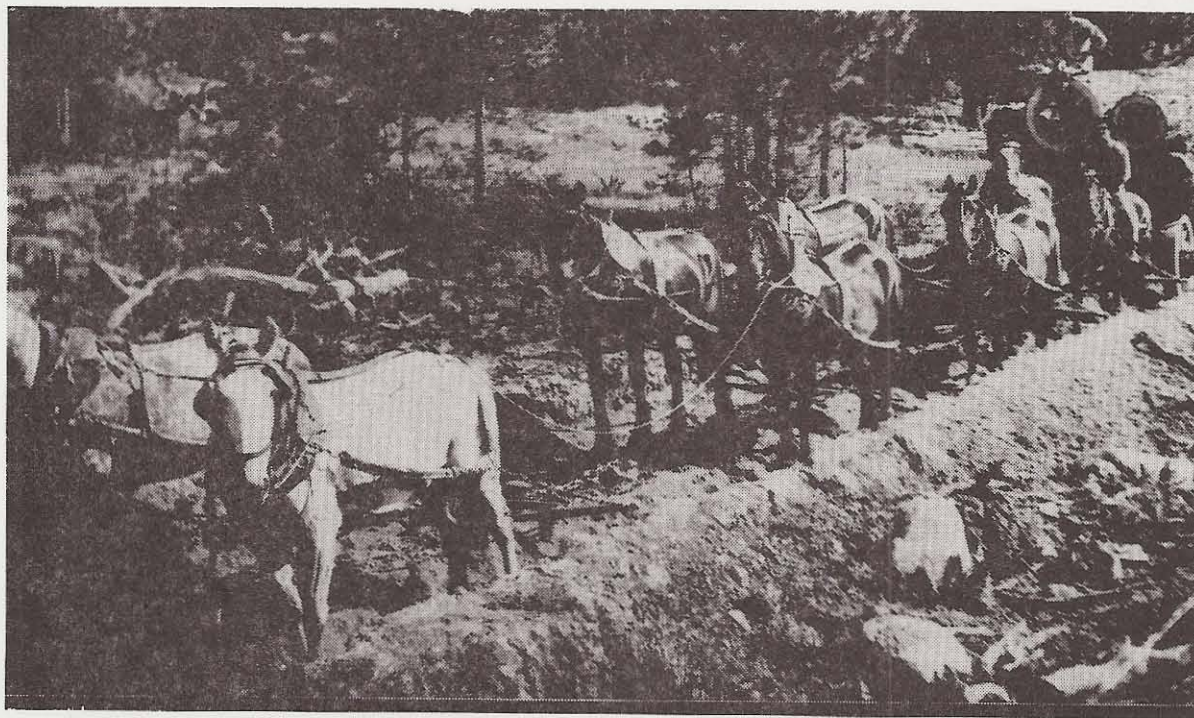
Most of the workers who worked at the Nichols Mill lived at the mill site. Employed at the mill were about ten men, a cook and an assistant foreman. There were about twelve cabins and a cook house in the area around the mill.⁷



The Nichols Mill Site--showing piles of drying lumber, the Cook House and cabins.

The men worked six days a week and usually worked from soon after sun-up to sun down. Wages averaged from \$2.50 to \$3.50 per day. The men were paid either monthly or by the season.⁸

Seldom was there such a thing as a weekend. Most of the men employed by the mill had families in Sierraville, so they spent their only free day, Sunday, with their families, working around the house, gardening, or doing what ever chores were necessary. Many of the men who got their work done on Sundays would spend the afternoon sitting on the porches of any of the several saloons in Sierraville. This form of visiting and exchanging gossip was one of the favorite pastimes of the area. There were four saloons on the main street of Sierraville, two of which were the Bucket of Blood and the Monte Carlo. There were also two hotels, both of which had saloons, so no one had to worry about dieing of thirst. Dances were held and were very popular with the people of Sierraville. Some of these dances were held above the present day restaurant in downtown Sierraville, and others were held in the open-air dance hall at Campbells. Campbells also had a baseball diamond where games were played on Sunday afternoons. Campbells was popular with people from all over Northern California--one of the highlight games at Campbells was played in 1913 between a Sacramento Team and a Truckee Team.⁹ Swimming was also enjoyed at Campbells. Even though there were many diversions on Sunday, a working man working at the Nichols Mill (or any of the sawmills in the Sierra Valley vicinity) was a working man, and had little extra time for pleasure.



A team and wagon--used to transport both logs and lumber at the Nichols Mill.

— 1/2

Mr. Nichols died in February, 1920. After his death, Mrs. Nichols leased the mill to Ed Lane, a resident of Portola, California. Ed Lane had the mill for two and a half years, and then Mrs. Nichols sold the machinery to various people, and sold the acreage to the Forest Service, which owns the land today.¹⁰

1. Taken from a letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Brown, San Francisco, California, dated May 22, 1970. Mrs. Brown is the daughter of the late Mrs. N. Dearwater of Sierraville.
2. Taken from the letter mentioned above.
3. The present town of Sierraville was at one time two towns, Sierraville and Randolph. Randolph comprised the area approximately one mile west of Sierraville. Several homes still stand from the days when this was Randolph, including the Kelso Dellera Home and the Copren-Burelle residence.
4. Newspaper clippings written by Aileen L. Barton, Calpine, California, 1940.
5. From an interview with Mae Dellera, Sierraville, Ca., May, 1970.
6. From interview listed above.
7. Taken from clippings written by C. G. Church, Early History of Sierra Valley. (no dates given)
8. From an interview with Mr. Kelso Dellera, Sierraville, California, May, 1970.
9. From interview listed above.

The writer of the above article is Miss Susan Diltz of Sierraville, California. Miss Diltz graduated from Loyalton High School, where she did her research for this article, and is presently attending the State University of California at Sacramento, California.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING IN ALLEGHANY, CALIFORNIA
ON JUNE 24, 1973

Approximately 28 members attended the June meeting held in Alleghany. Besides members from Loyalton, Sierraville, Sierra City, Downieville and Goodyear's Bar and Alleghany, there were members from Redding, Livermore and San Andreas. Our thanks to Mary Hope for the fine job she did in making the arrangements for the meeting. All present enjoyed a delicious "pot-luck" lunch, after which President Norma White called the meeting to order. Sec. Mary Hope read her extensive and informative minutes of previous meetings and correspondence she had sent and received. Georgene Coprengave an extensive treasurer's report. The Society has about one thousand dollars in our account now, but we have not yet paid for the 1973 bulletins. Anyone wishing a detailed treasurers report may get one from Georgene Copren. A steering committee was appointed to ascertain possible museum sites in Alleghany, Sierra City and Loyalton. The Society voted to push the "Museum Chain" plans and to do all possible to receive state funds. These funds will come from state bonds which will be voted on in June of 1974. Committee appointed was Jeanne McMahan, Mary Hope and Milt Gottardi. This committee was instructed to have a detailed report ready for the September Meeting in Sierra City. The Society members were urged to get the word around that we had museums in the tentative planning stage and to urge people who might have material for museums to hold on to it and not give it to museums outside the county. A nominations committee was appointed under the chairmanship of G. Copren. 1974 officers will be elected at the Sept. meeting. The next meeting will be in Sierra City, Community Hall, Sept. 16, 1973. It will be a pot-luck lunch. Darlene Messner, who does a tremendous job as corresponding secretary, was omitted from the list of officers on the title page.

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